

August 27, 2004

TO: Mr. Paul Dabbs
FR: Betsy Reifsnider
RE: Comments on draft Bulletin 160:03, Volume 3

Friends of the River has reviewed Volume 3: Regional Reports and has the following comments.

State Summary

1. The water portfolio approach is superior and more encompassing than the old water balance approach. The portfolio approach is better able to highlight areas where California lacks sufficient data gathering and analysis.
2. Page 8-9: Statewide Water Balance Summary gives the misleading impression to the public that environmental water is the largest “consumer” of water in the state. The water balance summary and table should explain that this water is not “locked up,” but is actually recycled, used repeatedly by other water users before that water makes its way to the sea.
3. Table 1-1 is helpful. However, Table 1-3 on Use and Distribution of Dedicated Supply again gives the misleading impression that Wild and Scenic River water is somehow locked up and not available to users upstream and downstream of the designated stretches of Wild and Scenic Rivers.
4. How will NAFTA affected the types and amounts of crops grown in California? Do we have any sources?

Sacramento River Hydrologic Region

1. In discussing water supply on page 3, how much evaporation occurs annually from the 43 reservoirs in the region? This would be a helpful calculation in determining if surface storage, groundwater storage, efficiency or recycling is the most reliable supply option.
2. On page 4, do we know how much of the precipitation used by forests and water outflows is also used for downstream agricultural and urban purposes in the Sacramento Valley? Are some water transfers first utilized by upstream users in the Sacramento Valley?
3. Water Quality: There is no mention of the rice herbicides and other pollutants from the Colusa Basin Drainage Canal still creating problems for downstream users.
[Information cited from Central Valley Regional Quality Control Board and U.S. Geological Survey].

4. The California Bay Delta Authority write-up of this chapter overlooks contributions of the Sacramento Water Forum, and even misnames it, erroneously calling it an “American River Water Forum.” We recommend that you use the better write-up of the Forum that’s found in Volume 3, Chapter 13 on the Mountain Counties.

5. How will the upcoming requirement for statewide residential water metering change water consumption in the Sacramento Valley?

6. If you include the activities of the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition, comprised of agricultural interests, then you must include the Sacramento Valley Environmental Water Caucus.

San Joaquin River Hydrologic Region

1. In discussing the problems of Friant Dam, more than fish are affected. Please include the crop problems and water shortages that Delta farmers face due to little or no water flowing downstream of Friant Dam to the Delta.

2. We notice that only CalFed related water challenges and opportunities are mentioned. Scant attention is given to other water-related issues, such as floodplain management.

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Region

1. This chapter is the only chapter that includes the importance of water-related tourism to a region’s economy. It is also mentioned in passing in the Mountain Counties chapter. In some cases, tourism is the main economic driver and should be mentioned more prominently.

Mountain Counties

1. Again, there is little mention of recreation and tourism, except as it adversely affects water supply. Free flowing rivers and good water quality should be stressed as vitally important to local communities.

2. Hydropower dramatically affects instream flows and natural resources. This issue should have greater prominence.

3. Increasingly, it appears global climate change will severely affect the mountain counties. Some information on global climate change from other volumes in Bulletin 160:03 could be included here, too.

4. We are glad there is some mention of the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (SNEP) Report included in this report.

5. This Chapter correctly describes the Sacramento Water Forum process. Please include it in the Sacramento Region Report as well.